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CHRISTIAAN SNOUCK HURGRONJE AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF DUTCH ISLAMIC POLICY IN INDONESIA

HARRY J. BENDA

EVER since the arrival of the Dutch East India Company in Southeast Asia at the turn of the seventeenth century, the Dutch had encountered Muslim hostility in Indonesia. Time and again, the consolidation of their expanding power was threatened by local outbreaks of Islamic-inspired resistance, led either by Indonesian rulers converted to the faith of the Prophet or, at the village level, by fanatical *ulama,* the independent teachers and scribes of Islam. In spite of the ultimate subjugation of the greater part of the archipelago to Dutch control, Islam not only continued to spread among ever greater numbers of Indonesians, but from the eighteenth century on received fresh impetus from increasing contact with the centers of Islamic orthodoxy in the Near East. Every year thousands of Indonesian Muslims embarked on the Mecca pilgrimage, some of them remaining there for long periods of study and returning home as bearers of orthodox teachings which were gradually displacing the mysticism and syncretism formerly prevalent in Indonesian Islam.[1]

As a consequence, by the late eighteenth century Indonesian Islam was showing growing signs of restiveness which in the course of the nineteenth century exploded in a series of major upheavals. Thus in 1825, Prince Diponegoro rose in revolt against "infidel" colonial rule.[2] Though the so-called Java War was easily suppressed by the Dutch, village unrest, fanned by Muslin scribes, continued to plague the colonial government on Java, the center of Dutch power. The third quarter of the century witnessed the beginnings of an even more serious uprising, in Acheh in Northern Sumatra, that soon grew into full-scale military operations fought under the banners of an Islamic "Holy War."[3] This increasing militancy of Indonesian Islam caused growing concern among administrators ill prepared to cope with it. Traditionally, Dutch attitudes toward Indonesian Islam had been shaped by a contradictory combination of exaggerated fears and hopes—both born of a lack of adequate knowledge, if not of almost total ignorance, of matters Islamic.

Dutch apprehensions and misconceptions of Islam, especially of Muslim fanatics—the "priests" and "popes" of the early Dutch literature concerning the subject—reached back to the first contacts between Dutch and Indonesians in the seventeenth century.[4] Islam was

[1] For a detailed discussion of syncretism and orthodoxy in Indonesian Islam, see G.-H. Bousquet, "Introduction à l'étude de l'Islam indonésien", *Revue des études Islamiques,* II-III (1938), pp. 235–359, *passim.*

[2] See J. M. van der Kroef, "Prince Diponegoro: Progenitor of Indonesian Nationalism," *Far Eastern Quarterly,* VIII (1949), pp. 430–33.

[3] For a good account of the Acheh War in English, see E. S. de Klerck, *History of the Netherlands East Indies* (Rotterdam, 1938), II, 342 ff.

[4] See J. J. van de Velde, *De godsdienstige rechtspraak in Nederlandsch-Indië, staatsrechtelijk beschouwd* (Leiden, 1928), pp. 5 ff., and literature cited there. It was due to these early misconceptions that anomalies such as the so-called *priesterraad* (priests' council), used to designate religious judicial tribunals, stubbornly

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thought of as a tightly organized religion, similar in many respects to Roman Catholicism, with a hierarchical clergy owing allegiance to the Turkish caliph, and wielding great powers over Indonesian rulers and their subjects, Muslims whose lives were believed to be regulated by Islamic law. Both in its international ramifications, including the danger of Indonesian appeals to Muslim rulers abroad, and in its hold over native life, Islam thus appeared as a formidable enemy. These fears had helped to shape a policy of alliance with the princes and aristocracy on Java, and with sultans, rajahs, and local chiefs on other islands, who, for political reasons of their own, were known to be either lukewarm Muslims or outright enemies of Islamic "fanaticism."

On the other hand, particularly in the nineteenth century, many Dutchmen both at home and in the Indies had great hopes of eliminating the influence of Islam by rapidly Christianizing the majority of Indonesians. These hopes were partly anchored in the fairly widespread, if facile, Western belief in the superiority of Christianity to Islam, and partly in the erroneous assumption that the syncretic nature of Indonesian Islam at the village level would render conversion to Christianity easier in Indonesia than in other Muslim lands.[5]

While not so closely allied with missionary enterprises as the Spaniards and Portuguese in Southeast Asia had been in previous centuries, Dutch governments at times were under strong pressure from Christian political parties in parliament. The Netherlands' constitution allowed Christian missions, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, to operate in Indonesia, and missionary work in the colony was subsidized by public funds. In spite of such government assistance, Christianity had been able to spread only very slowly—and even then only among Indonesians living in areas which had not previously been Islamized.[6]

Toward the close of the nineteenth century, Dutch fears, reinforced by the happenings of the last few decades, tended to predominate over the hopes concerning the future of Indonesian Islam. In the absence of an Islamic policy proper, the colonial government sought to place restrictions on Indonesian Muslims, especially Mecca pilgrims, who were held responsible for spreading agitation and rebelliousness in Indonesia. The result of these restrictive actions was, however, entirely negative. Although on Java large-scale rebellion under the banner of Islam ceased after the Java War, peasant outbreaks under local Muslim leadership increased in frequency. In Sumatra, the Dutch were involved in drawn out warfare against the fanatical Achehnese. A new course in matters Islamic thus became imperative for the future of Dutch rule in Indonesia.

survived in Dutch official nomenclature until the end of the colonial regime.

[5] In some missionary quarters these attitudes are apparently still held today. For a recent re-statement, replete with misconceptions about both Indonesian Islam and Dutch Islamic policies, see A. Rétif, "Aspects religieux de l'Indonésie," *Études* (1954), pp. 371–81.

[6] W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: A Study of Social Change* (The Hague and Bandung, 1956), pp. 204–05. In fact, the colonial authorities, exercising the statutory right to determine the extent of missionary activities, barred Christian missionaries from areas known to be strongly influenced by Islamic "fanaticism." The statute governing and restricting the admission and activities of missionaries was often hotly debated in the Dutch parliament, imposing upon the ministry of colonies no less than on colonial administrators the difficult task of balancing the ardor of Christian spokesmen at home against the dictates of a moderate policy aimed at not arousing Muslim sentiment in the colony.

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Against this background, in 1889 an outstanding Dutch Arabicist and Islamologist, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, was appointed to the newly created office of Advisor on Arabian and Native Affairs. In addition to possessing intimate knowledge of Indonesian Islam—a sojourn, in disguise, had provided him with unique insight into the Indonesian haji-colony at Mecca—Snouck Hurgronje was one of the great colonial statesmen of the Netherlands. He brought to his office not only unrivalled expertise, indefatigable energy, and moral candor, but, at least equally important, a vision for the future evolution of Indonesian society in keeping with the best traditions of nineteenth-century liberalism. Snouck's understanding of the nature of Indonesian Islam, though open to some question, was invaluable in steering Dutch Islamic policies along a course which was, at least initially, successful. His principal achievement was no doubt the part he played in the political reorientation which, together with improved military tactics, at long last led to the conclusion of the Acheh War.[7] Beyond this, Snouck's fame derived from the more general improvement in the relations between colonial authorities and most Muslim leaders in Indonesia. Especially on Java, a *modus vivendi* came before long to replace the hostility of former times. No wonder that to some of his contemporaries Snouck Hurgronje appeared as the almost legendary architect of a successful Dutch Islamic policy, the man who had inaugurated a new era in Dutch-Indonesian relations. Such, indeed, was his stature that he continued, as professor in Leiden University and as consultant on native affairs to the ministry of colonies, to exert a lasting, if ambiguous, influence long after his departure from Indonesia in 1907.

The formulation of an Islamic policy involved, above all, the substitution of sober facts for the motley of fears and hopes which had surrounded Indonesian Muslims for so long. In this respect, Snouck Hurgronje's masterly and scholarly analyses have remained an indispensable guide to the conditions of Indonesian Islam at the turn of the century.[8] Snouck countered Dutch fears concerning Islam at both the international and the local level by arguing, in the first place, that in the absence of a clerical establishment in Islam the so-called "priests" and "popes" in Indonesia were no more members of a religious hierarchy than they were the executors of commands from the caliph of Constantinople. Since the caliphate was not vested with ecclesiastic powers of dictation in matters of dogma, the caliph was but the well-nigh powerless symbol of the nonexisting unity of all Muslims. Pan-Islam, however dangerous as a vague ideology, was thus not a political reality

[7] For a brief discussion, see H. J. de Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesië* (The Hague and Bandung, 1949), pp. 440 ff. Snouck Hurgronje's crucial contribution to the Dutch victory over Acheh, long overshadowed by the military achievements of General van Heutsz (later Governor General of the Indies), is emphasized in K. van der Maaten's well-documented study, *Snouck Hurgronje en de Atjeh Oorlog* (Leiden, 1948; 2 vols.).

[8] The summary of Snouck Hurgronje's work in the text is based on his voluminous writings on Indonesian Islam, the greater part of which were reprinted in the two parts of Volume II of his *Verspreide Geschriften* (Bonn, Leipzig, and Leiden, 1924–26; 6 vols.). References are limited to points of special significance, while the broad outline is generally based on the following essays: "Over Panislamisme" (1910; I, 364–80); "La politique musulmane de la Hollande" (1911; Vol. IV, Pt. 1, pp. 225–306); and "Dee Islam in Nederlandsch-Indië" (1913; Vol. IV, Pt. 2, pp. 361–91). For a recent selection from Snouck Hurgronje's scholarly writings, see G.-H. Bousquet and J. Schacht (eds.), *Selected Works of C. Snouck Hurgronje, Edited in English and French* (Leiden, 1957).

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identifiable with the caliphate. The Turkish government itself, Snouck made clear, had "deposited the panislamic program in the museum of [its] political antiquities."[9]

Second, the vast majority of Indonesian Muslims, and even the "priests" themselves, were not necessarily and a priori fanatics or sworn enemies of "infidel" rule. Snouck showed that the officials in charge of administering Islamic worship and religious justice were traditionally the subordinates, rather than the superiors, of native rulers, and that neither they nor their masters were as a rule addicted to Muslim "fanaticism." And even the unattached *ulama,* far from being as a group engaged in a sinister conspiracy, were—like their counterparts in other Islamic lands—independent and, as it were, other-worldly scribes and teachers, most of whom desired nothing better than to serve Allah in peace. Finally, Snouck destroyed the myth according to which the Mecca pilgrimage transformed thousands of peaceful Indonesian *hajis* into rebellious fanatics.

Realistically appraising the place of Islam in Indonesian society, Snouck furthermore showed that Indonesians, like other Muslims, did not owe sole allegiance to their religion. He was the first Dutch scholar to recognize both the importance of *adat,* or customary law, and the limitations which it imposed on the influence of Islam in the social and legal life of its Indonesian believers. In these matters Indonesian Muslims, he pointed out, differ in degree rather than in kind from their co-religionists in the Middle East. Everywhere and at all times the strict law of Islam had had to adapt itself to the traditional customs and mores, as well as to the political realities, governing the lives of its adherents. Thus, while Koranic law had gained acceptance in the realm of marital and family law, in almost all other matters the Indonesian *adat* had prevailed. However great, therefore, the authority exercised by either Islamic judges or independent teachers, in secular and political affairs Indonesians continued to be guided by their *adat* and to obey the traditional bearers of political authority.[10]

On the other hand, however, Snouck insisted that Islam was not to be underestimated either as a religious or as a political force in Indonesia. For one thing, Snouck maintained—countering the false hopes held by some of his compatriots—that Indonesians, for all the "impurities" of the village Islam of the peasantry, considered themselves to be good and devout Muslims, profoundly attached to their own version of the faith. He therefore counseled against the unwarranted and optimistic expectations of large-scale conversions to Christianity.[11] For another, he even anticipated that the Islamization of Indonesia would be furthered, in extent as well as in depth, by the extension of the *Pax Nederlandica.* Not only was Islam likely to spread to hitherto pagan areas, Islamic orthodoxy was equally likely to wage increasingly successful war against social institutions opposed to its tenets—such

[9] Snouck Hurgronje, "Over Panislamisme," pp. 372–73.

[10] For a recent discussion, see J. Prins, "Adat-law and Muslim Religious Law in Modern Indonesia," *Welt des Islams,* N.S. I (1951), 283–300.

[11] "Even in those parts of Java in which orthodox Islam has gained the least grip upon the population . . . the Hindu *pandit* would experience as great difficulties in communicating with simple peasants as would the Christian missionary; yet the Muslim *kiyayi* or . . . teacher, if he deigns to stoop to this lowly creature, is assured of a deferential hearing." Snouck Hurgronje, "Het Mohammedanisme" (1911), *op. cit.,* Vol. IV, Pt. 2, p. 206.

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as the matriarchal family in the Minangkabau region of western Sumatra—in succeeding decades.[12]

But while Snouck Hurgronje stressed the peaceful nature of the Islamic religion in Indonesia, he was by no means blind to the political potential of Muslim fanaticism. There was always the danger that some dedicated and doctrinaire believers, bent on carrying the demands of Muslim theologians to their literal political extremes, might turn into fanatic proponents of Islamic unity and world empire, inciting their followers to holy war against the "infidel" rulers of the Indies. There remained, in other words, cause for fear, but fear of a small minority—especially of fanatical *ulama*—dedicated to the notions of pan-Islam. They were the more dangerous because of the Islamic elements in the syncretic religion of the Javanese peasantry, which had "absorbed [its] ideas just sufficiently to doubt the continued legality of the European administration."[13] The enemy, then, was not Islam as a religion but Islam as a political doctrine, both in the shape of agitation by local fanatics and in the shape of pan-Islam, whether or not it was in fact inspired by Islamic rulers abroad like the caliph.

Snouck Hurgronje's recommendations for an Islamic policy follow logically from his analysis of Indonesian Islam. Broadly speaking, he envisaged a division of Islam into two parts, one religious, the other political. Toward the former, Snouck counseled in favor of toleration: a policy of neutrality toward religious life. If for no other reason than that the overwhelming majority of Indonesians were, and were likely to remain, Muslims, and convinced as he was that the Islamic religion as such formed no threat to colonial rule, he argued that its toleration was the *sine qua non* for pacification and stability. Suppression was neither wise nor necessary, let alone honorable for a country dedicated to religious neutrality at home. For similar reasons, no barriers should be placed in the way of the Mecca pilgrimage; such interference would, again, militate against the principles of personal liberty embodied in the Dutch constitution.[14] But while the government should respect the religious life of its Muslim subjects, it must not "platonically envisage all those trends that bear, or tend to bear, a political character."[15] Any sign of incitement must, therefore, be resolutely met by force, and all interference in matters Islamic from abroad must be nipped in the bud.

Religious neutrality, including the lifting of all obstacles from the Mecca pilgrimage, would, if strictly observed, convince not only the majority of religious officials but also most, if not all, *ulama* of the honest intentions of the Dutch administration and would persuade them that they had nothing to fear from the colonial government as long as they abstained from political propaganda. Where, on the other hand, Mus-

[12] Snouck Hurgronje, "Advies over codificatie van het Adatrecht" (1893), *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Pt. 1, p. 271. Snouck also noted that Islamic orthodoxy paradoxically appeared to thrive in the Central Javanese principalities and in Batavia, in spite of the fact that the former were the very center of the pre-Islamic Hindu-Javanese civilization, while European influence had been most profound in the latter (*Ibid.*, p. 270). Cf. also C. A. O. van Nieuwenhuijze, "Moslims leven en Indonesische levenssfeer," *Wending* 4 (1949), p. 140.

[13] Snouck Hurgronje, "Over Panislamisme," p. 375.

[14] For an elaboration of this problem, see Snouck Hurgronje's "De hadji-politiek der Indische regeering," *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Pt. 2, pp. 173–98.

[15] "La politique musulmane de la Hollande," p. 279.

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lim fanaticism had already reared its head or had, as in Acheh, gained the upper hand, Snouck insisted that drastic —if need be, military—action would be needed to restore Dutch authority and thus lay the groundwork for religious peace and for a *modus vivendi* between the colonial rulers and Indonesian Islam. The determined application of the twin policies of tolerance and vigilance should, finally, go hand in hand with Dutch support for and encouragement of those social elements least under the sway of Islamic fanaticism, the *adat* chiefs and rulers of the Outer Islands and the traditional aristocracy on Java.[16]

But, however important, neither pacification based on firm alliance with *adat* authority nor the attainment of a workable *modus vivendi* with Indonesian Islam was to Snouck Hurgronje an end in itself. They were, indeed, no more than the prerequisites for the healthy growth of Indonesian society. This growth, however, ultimately called for a new and bold colonial policy in Indonesia. Snouck's Islamic policy, that is to say, was only part of a larger scheme which went beyond the immediate needs to a wider vision of the future.

This larger vision was implicitly based on three central considerations. First, while Islam—whether in the syncretic garb of Indonesian village religion or in the sterner attire of Islamic orthodoxy —could be made to accept foreign overlordship, it could at best be expected only to acquiesce in coexistence between Christian rulers and Muslim subjects. In other words, as long as Indonesians, especially their leaders, remained Muslims, the colonial relationship could not give way to a lasting bond between Indonesia and the Netherlands.

Second, though *adat* institutions formed the traditionally most powerful barrier against Islam and though their representatives were thus the obvious allies of the colonial power, the *adat,* because of its intrinsic conservatism as well as local particularisms, could not be expected to stem the expanding influence of the dynamic and universalistic faith of the Prophet. Respect for the *adat* and recognition of its ability gradually to adapt itself to changing conditions had to go hand in hand with the sober realization that an accelerated rate of change was eroding its foundations too quickly to guarantee its survival. In short, blind support for the status quo of the traditional *adat* pattern, quite apart from inevitably widening the gulf between Muslims and Christian rulers, could not suffice for the long-term purposes of colonial administration. Invaluable though such support might be in the greater part of the Outer Islands, where Western influence and Dutch control were as yet peripheral, it was clearly inadequate for Java and some other parts of the archipelago, where the impact of colonial rule, together with economic and religious forces, had speeded social evolution.

Finally, and most important, in spite of the fact that in many areas of Indonesia Islam had been not only the beneficiary of the changes wrought by this evolution but was in fact expanding its hold at the expense of the *adat,* Islam held no keys to healthy social growth. It could not, in other words, generate from within itself the dynamics of a

[16] This policy of support for the secular *adat* authorities was the substance of Snouck Hurgronje's advice with regard to the situation in Acheh. For a brief summary, see his "Eene onbezonnen vraag" (1899), *op. cit.,* Vol. IV, Pt. 1, pp. 371–86. Cf. also A. J. Piekaar, *Atjeh en de oorlog met Japan* (The Hague and Bandung, 1949), p. 5. A fuller treatment can be found in Snouck Hurgronje's larger work, *The Achehnese* (Leiden, 1906), I, xvi ff.

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higher, modern civilization. Thus even if orthodoxy were ultimately to triumph over the syncretism and mysticism of the traditional village religion, even if it were to displace the Indonesian *adat* in the greater part of the colony, its victory would yet not constitute a victory for progress so much as for religious medievalism.

Yet—and this was the crux of Snouck Hurgronje's philosophy of colonialism—Indonesia, and Java first of all, would have to make the transition to the modern world of which it was increasingly becoming a part. Since a modern Indonesia by definition could be neither an Islamic Indonesia nor an Indonesia ruled by the *adat*, it would have to be a Westernized Indonesia. Dutch rule, then, was to be primarily justified, and ultimately judged, by the degree in which it had aided Indonesia's adaptation to the twentieth century.

The ultimate defeat of Indonesian Islam, the freeing of its adherents from what Snouck Hurgronje called the "narrow confines of the Islamic system,"[17] was to be achieved by the association of Indonesians with Dutch culture. It was only natural that Snouck Hurgronje should focus his attention upon the Javanese aristocracy as the first and most obvious social class to be drawn into the orbit of Westernization. The aristocracy's higher cultural level, its proximity to Western influences brought about by contacts with the European administration, and, finally, its traditional aloofness from Islam, made it the logical beneficiary of Snouck's assimilationist schemes. According to Snouck, the Indonesian nobility, having lost their cultural and political moorings as a result of Dutch conquest, were clamoring for participation in Dutch culture. The Netherlands, he declared, had "assumed the moral duty of teaching [them] and of making them partners in our own [i.e., Dutch] culture and social life."[18] Such a partnership would close the gulf between rulers and ruled. No longer divided by religious allegiances, both would come to share a common culture and a common political allegiance. Though at first this community of interests would embrace only the Javanese elite, Indonesian society, rooted in the *adat*, would prove adaptable enough gradually to follow the path charted by its traditional leadership.

For association to become a reality, Western education had to be made available to ever larger numbers of Indonesians. In the final analysis, then, Western education was the surest means of reducing and ultimately defeating the influence of Islam in Indonesia. In competition with the attractions of Western education and cultural association, Islam could not but be the loser. Indeed, its decline was already observable. Whereas in 1890 Snouck had noted an increase in the number of Islamic theological training centers, twenty years later he triumphantly observed that Western schools were starting to win the race against their Muslim counterparts.[19] Even then, however, much remained to be done if Western civilization was to win the race against Islam in Indonesia.

Education was only the first step. It would have to be followed by granting the Indonesian beneficiaries of Western

[17] "La politique musulmane de la Hollande," p. 294.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] Compare Snouck Hurgronje's observations in "Rapport over de Mohammedaansche godsdienstige rechtspraak" (1890), *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Pt. 1, p. 102, with those in "La politique musulmane de la Hollande," p. 294. See also I. J. Brugmans, *Geschiedenis van het onderwijs in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Groningen, 1938), pp. 6–7.

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education a steadily increasing share in the management of the colony's political and administrative affairs.[20] Snouck was well aware that such a policy of Indonesianization would involve a sharp departure from past Dutch attitudes, governmental no less than private, toward the education of qualified Indonesians and their employment in the higher ranks of the colonial administration.[21] More than that—he knew that what was called for was, in essence, a gradual dissolution of the colonial status of the Dutch East Indies. But he was convinced that only such an imaginative break with the past would in the end build a lasting bridge between rulers and ruled.

Snouck prophetically warned that time was running out fast: the social evolution, on Java in particular, had been steadily gaining momentum for decades and could no longer be halted. The alternative to timely Dutch action, steering this evolution along an associationist channel, would be that its direction might pass by default into the hands of others inimical not only to the modernization of Indonesia but, indeed, to the continuance of Dutch rule itself.[22]

An appraisal of Snouck Hurgronje can be useful only if the positive as well as the negative aspects of his work are viewed in the context of his own times. Thus his lofty and impatient liberalism on the one hand, and his basically low esteem for Islam[23] on the other, were both rooted in nineteenth-century Western thought. Association itself was a typical product of the era's idealistic and confident hopes for bridging the gulf separating East and West. Again, the cultural milieu of the nineteenth century was doubtless responsible for Snouck's optimistic—if not arrogant—belief in the superiority of Western civilization and his inability to see the potential for growth in Islam and, though to a lesser extent, in Indonesian traditional culture. Not only were Snouck Hurgronje's views thus rooted in the temper of his times; they were in fact representative of a new era in Dutch colonial policy—the so-called Ethical Policy, which was officially inaugurated in 1901.[24] The liberal and humanitarian advocates of the new course shared with Snouck the conviction that the Netherlands were charged with a moral responsibility for the material and spiritual welfare of their Indonesian "wards." The new policy was to make native welfare its main concern, breaking with a past of colonial exploitation, whether governmental or private.

Like other contemporary Dutch reformers, Snouck believed that economic interests would allow themselves to be subordinated to considerations of welfare policies. Like others, too, his confidence in the possibility of steering Indonesian developments along Western lines made him neglect the serious and disintegrative effects which Westernization, including even the best-intended

[20] "La politique musulmane de la Hollande," p. 300.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 289 ff. While Snouck welcomed the educational work of Christian missions in Indonesia, he deplored their confessional bias, which rendered missionary education "with the Bible" unacceptable to most Muslims.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 301.

[23] For an example of Indonesian Muslim leaders' resentment of what they felt to be Snouck Hurgronje's deprecation of Islam, see Haji Agus Salim's article, "De sluiering van de vrouw," written in 1926 and reprinted in *Djedjak langkah Hadji A. Salim: Pilihan karangan utjapan dan pendabat beliau dari dulu sampai sekarang* (Djakarta, 1954), p. 174.

[24] For a brief but succinct discussion of the "Ethical Policy," see A. Vandenbosch, *The Dutch East Indies: Its Government, Problems and Politics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1944), pp. 63–73.

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liberal reforms, was bound to have on Indonesian society.[25] Yet though in many respects Snouck Hurgronje was a typical representative of the ethical era, his courage and vision raised him far above most of his contemporaries. Few foresaw as clearly as he the ultimate demise of colonialism; fewer still were prepared to draw the logical and inevitable conclusions from this insight. In pressing for higher education of the Indonesian elite, for their association with Dutch culture, and for the rapid Indonesianization of colonial administration, Snouck virtually stood alone.

It was, indeed, not his associationist principles but his specifically Islamic policies which found immediate acceptance. In matters Islamic, Snouck was the recognized and virtually unchallenged expert of the ethical era. But while there can be little doubt that few Western, if not also Muslim,[26] scholars could match his intimate knowledge of the Islamic faith and its adherents in Arabia and in Indonesia, Snouck's plausible, yet facile, separation of religion and politics in Islam was, in the long run, unrealistic. It belied the very universalism of the faith which, not unlike medieval Christianity, does not recognize the existence of independent, secular realms of life. Even if this universalism had frequently been forced to compromise with divergent realities in most Muslim lands, its claims remained nonetheless intact. Separation of religion and politics, in other words, was at best a temporary phenomenon of Islam in decline. In an era of Islamic awakening, it could not survive for long, either in independent Muslim lands or in Islamic areas ruled by non-Muslims.[27]

The problematical nature of his neat but misleading compartmentalization was, perhaps, obscured by the fact that it seemed to correspond to the conditions of Indonesian Islam at the turn of the century. It was obscured, that is to say, by the spectacular successes following in the wake of the application of Snouck's Islamic policies. In Acheh vigorous military action against fanatical *ulama,* combined with Dutch support for *adat* chiefs, at long last brought about the termination of the war. Freed from this major political and military preoccupation, the Netherlands could now devote their resources and manpower to the pacification of large areas in the Outer Islands where they had hitherto exercised no more than nominal control.[28]

More impressive still were the results of the new policy of religious neutrality —in particular, the freeing of the Mecca pilgrimage—on Java. While no major Muslim-led revolt had threatened the center of Dutch power since the suppres-

[25] Cf. B. Schrieke, "Native Society in the Transformation Period," *The Effect of Western Influence on the Native Civilizations of the Malay Archipelago,* ed. by B. Schrieke (Batavia, 1929), pp. 237-47. The best contemporary discussion of the impact of Western forces on Indonesian society can be found in Wertheim, *passim.*

[26] It is indicative of Snouck's prestige among Muslim scholars that in 1911 the University of Cairo offered him a chair in Arabic, which he declined. See van der Maaten, I, 52 ff., for comments on Snouck's stature in the Near East.

[27] One of the most scathing comments by a leading Indonesian Muslim on Snouck's arbitrary division can be found in an article written by Mohammad Natsir in 1939. See "Oleh-oleh dari Algiers: Prof. Bousquet tentang 'Testamen Prof. Snouck Hurgronje dalam teori dan praktek'," reprinted in his *Capita Selecta* (Bandung and The Hague, 1955), pp. 164–65.

[28] See Wertheim, pp. 65 ff., and J. S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge and New York, 1944), pp. 236–37. Snouck Hurgronje played an important part in the expansion of Dutch power in the Outer Islands. He designed a short treaty—the so-called "Korte Verklaring"—which facilitated the establishment of Dutch suzerainty over the territories nominally ruled by Indonesian potentates. See also J. M. Somer, *De Korte Verklaring* (Breda, 1934), pp. 238 ff.

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sion of the Java War, the island had been plagued by incessant Muslim restiveness at the village level. The Islamic "New Deal" proffered by the sagacious adviser was accepted by many *ulama* who, in return for governmental noninterference in matters religious, acquiesced in rule by "infidels." This was a major victory for the colonial government, since the new *modus vivendi* with Islamic leaders significantly reduced the grass-roots commotion on the island. In fact, Snouck's policies continued to pay dividends, for some of the Muslim scribes and teachers remained dependable allies of the Netherlands until the end of Dutch rule in Indonesia.[29]

Snouck Hurgronje's stature as a colonial statesman thus rested on solid achievements. Even though he was not without bitter and vociferous critics,[30] in the eyes of many of his contemporaries the success of his policies seemed to vindicate the new course which he had, at times against stubborn opposition, so brilliantly and tirelessly advocated. Yet neither the undeniable fact that Snouck's name looms large in the history of the ethical era of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, nor the record of the unwavering tributes paid him by so many administrators in the colony and political leaders at home, can be taken as a reliable guide in assessing his actual influence on the direction of colonial policy. In spite of the continued invocation of Snouck Hurgronje's name, Indonesian developments—not least among them Islamic developments—as well as Dutch colonial policy came before long to deviate so profoundly from Snouck Hurgronje's prognostications and recommendations that both seem to have been rendered largely irrelevant or obsolete as early as the first two decades of the twentieth century.[31]

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[29] See Wertheim, p. 201.

[30] On the occasion of Snouck's seventieth birthday, on February 8, 1936, the daily newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* carried the following appreciation: "There are few people in the Netherlands who have aroused such bitter enmity and such deep and warm friendship among their contemporaries and their compatriots" (quoted in van der Maaten, II, 177). Snouck's principal opponents were to be found among the political leaders of the clerical parties in the Netherlands parliament, who countered his ideas of cultural association by strenuous pleas for the Christianization of Indonesia. At times conservative members also criticized Snouck for his "idealistic" visions. See W. H. Vermeulen's chapter, "Oost-Indië in het Nederlandse parlement, 1891–1918," in W. J. Welderen Rengers and C. W. de Vries, *Schets eener parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland* (The Hague, 1955), IV, 319–21 and 353–54, resp.

[31] The writer has discussed later developments in his book, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945* (The Hague and Bandung, 1958), pp. 32–99.

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